

# Urban District of Lakes

I



## ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

## Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR

1971

Stricklandgate House, P.O. Box 18, Kendal

Telephone Number: Kendal 23502

KENDAL

TITUS WILSON & SON LTD.

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## NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT.

Area of the Urban District in acres ... ..	49,917
Population at 1961 Census ... ..	5,811
Population (Registrar-General's mid year estimate)	5,040
Inhabited Houses ... ..	2,229
Rateable Value ... ..	£249,351
Product of a Penny Rate ... ..	£2,382
Rate in the Pound levied ... ..	0.76½p-0.86p
of which the County Rate was ... ..	0.52p

The Urban District of Lakes lies in the heart of the English Lake District and is the nucleus of the National Park. About three miles of the north-eastern shore of Windermere Lake lies within the District and the inhabited areas are sited along three main valley systems which radiate from the Lake. To the west lie the Langdales, to the north the dales of Rydal and Grasmere, and to the north-east the Troutbeck Valley which leads over the Kirkstone Pass to the geographically detached dalehead of Patterdale and Glenridding at the head of Ullswater Lake. Your Council Offices are situated at Ambleside.

The valley bottoms lie between 150 and 300 feet above sea level in the major western portion, and in the Patterdale area at about 500 feet. The massive crags and fells rise steeply to altitudes of between two and three thousand feet, comprising some of the finest mountain scenery in Great Britain. Some of the valleys are wooded but the fellsides are majestically covered only by brackens and heather. The stone-built houses are scattered irregularly along the valleys, with only two large villages or townships of any size, Ambleside and Grasmere. The District is therefore essentially rural in character. These geographical features determine the natural lines of communication and therefore influence the spread of infectious diseases.

The geology of the District is almost entirely confined to the Borrowdale Volcanic Series of lavas, tuffs and agglomerates with some igneous intrusions. Lateral pressure has converted some of the tuffs into slates suitable for roofing. In the extreme south of the District the thin bands of the Coniston limestone and Ashgillian series are interposed between the Borrowdale series and the commencement of the Silurian Rocks which stretch away to the south of the County. These geological characteristics are of great significance in the supervision of water supplies, sewerage and occupational diseases as well as affecting the economics of the District.



The climate is mild and equable in the valleys, and invigorating on the fellsides and uplands. The dales of Rydal, Grasmere and Troutbeck are sheltered from the prevailing westerly winds, and, being open to the south, provide full access to sunshine. The Langdales are more exposed, and Patterdale, though sheltered, has a northerly aspect. Temperature gradient inversions are occasional in the spring and autumn but are soon dispelled in the mornings. The rainfall averages 70 inches a year, but this figure is due more to the heaviness of the rain when it occurs rather than to an undue proportion of rainy days. Snow may be expected for one or two weeks in the late winter.

The District is predominantly a holiday centre for climbing, walking and touring around to enjoy the scenery of mountains and lakes. There is also a basic residential character, divided between the local folk who work there, people who commute daily to Kendal, and an ever changing pattern of people who have holiday houses or come to live here on retirement.

There is also a huge seasonal influx of holiday visitors to the Lake District National Park. Many of them stay in the hotels and boarding-houses, and many thousands more come for the day by coaches and private cars, particularly since the motorways have brought us within easy distance of the great northern and midland conurbations.

This increasing tourist trade has been imposed upon the basic characteristics of agriculture, mainly sheep-farming, and thus many of the small local industries help to balance the seasonal fluctuations. There are also slate quarries and knitwear making, in addition to the customary service trades for the area. The variety of these opportunities for local employment has, with emigration, provided the economic security and prosperity which are important factors in the maintenance of the public health.

## STAFF.

Name.	Qualifications.	Office.	Whole or Part Time.	Other Offices.
Madge, F. T. ..	M.D., Ch.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.	Medical Officer of Health	Part	M.O.H. Combined County Districts of Westmorland
Smith, F. R. ..	M.A.P.H.I.	Public Health Inspector	Part	Building Surveyor
Gray, M. ..	—	Clerk	Part	—
Machell, B. M. ..	—	Clerk to Medical Officer of Health	Part	Clerk to M.O.H. Combined County Districts of Westmorland

### Staff Changes.

There were none during the year.

## VITAL STATISTICS.

The following extracts are made from information supplied by the Registrar-General with figures for last year for comparison.

Area of the District in acres      ...      ...      ...      49,917

	1970	1971
Estimated civilian population (mid year) ..	5,280	5,040
Live Births. Legitimate— males .. ..	25	26
females .. ..	22	19
Illegitimate— males .. ..	4	3
females .. ..	—	1
Total .. ..	51	49
Crude Rate per 1,000 population	9.7	9.7
Corrected Rate per 1,000 population .. .. .	10.7	10.1
Birth Rate for England and Wales .. .. .	16.0	16.0
Illegitimate Birth Rate per 1,000 live births. .. ..	78	81
Still Births. Legitimate— males .. ..	—	—
females .. ..	—	—
Illegitimate— males .. ..	—	—
females .. ..	—	—
Total .. ..	—	—
Total (live and still) births .. ..	51	49
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births .. .. .	—	—
Rate for England and Wales .. ..	13	12
Deaths. males .. .. .	25	20
females .. .. .	43	33
Total .. .. .	68	53
Crude Rate per 1,000 population .. ..	12.9	10.5
Corrected Rate per 1,000 population	9.3	7.6
Rate for England and Wales .. ..	11.7	11.6



	1970	1971
Infantile Deaths (under 1 year)		
Total deaths under 1 year .. ..	1	2
Rate per 1,000 live births .. ..	20	41
Rate for England and Wales ..	18	18
Legitimate .. .. .	1	2
Rate per 1,000 legitimate live births	21	44
Illegitimate .. .. .	—	—
Rate per 1,000 illegitimate live births	—	—
Neonatal Deaths (under 4 weeks) .. ..		
Total neonatal deaths .. ..	1	2
Rate per 1,000 live births .. ..	20	41
Rate for England and Wales ..	12	12
Early Neonatal Deaths (under 1 week)		
Total early neonatal deaths .. ..	—	2
Rate per 1,000 live births .. ..	—	41
Rate for England and Wales ..	11	10
Perinatal Mortality		
Stillbirths and deaths under 1 week	—	2
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still)		
births .. .. .	—	41
Rate for England and Wales ..	23	22
Maternal Mortality		
Total Deaths .. .. .	—	—
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still)		
births .. .. .	—	—
Rate for England and Wales ..	0.18	0.17

Deaths from certain causes:—	1970.	1971.
Cancer ... ..	14	10
Whooping Cough ... ..	Nil	Nil
Measles ... ..	Nil	Nil

The main causes of death were:—

Heart Disease ... ..	20
Cancer ... ..	10
Cerebro-vascular Disease ... ..	8

## **COMMENTARY ON THE VITAL STATISTICS.**

The published preliminary report on the 1971 Census records that 5,811 persons were counted as being present in Lakes Urban District on the night of 25/26th April, 1971.

This figure will be subject to revision later, when appropriate transfer adjustments may alter the picture. A factual count in a holiday area, such as ours, is influenced by the time of year when it is made, and be very different from the normal resident population. The Registrar-General's mid year estimate for the latter was 5,040.

Comment will be better deferred until the final analyses of the 1971 Census becomes available, and a proper prospective cannot be obtained by considering merely one year's changes. It is the general trend of population which is important for the planning of your future housing, water and sewerage requirements, and for the broader issues of the economic prosperity of your District.

We have always recognised that this District relies heavily on immigration to maintain our numbers, and these are usually people who come to live here on retirement. This has caused us to have a much higher proportion of elderly people in our local community than in most other districts. The average percentage of people over 65 years of age in England and Wales was 11.9% at the 1961 Census, and the average for Westmorland was 14.9%. Lakes Urban District had 16.5%. It means also that the younger age-groups will have to keep awake to provide the community support which elderly people need to make their survival achievements worthwhile.

### **Birth Rate.**

Your birth rate, both crude and corrected, were as usual far below the national average.

### **Death Rate.**

Your death rate was above the national rate. It fluctuates either side from year to year, but it is never far from the national figure. I do not attach much significance to these variations. Heart disease and cancer take the biggest toll.

### **Mountain Accidents.**

Accidents on our mountains are a special hazard in this District. A regular toll of death and suffering happens every year. Most of these accidents are preventable, and they mostly affect our visitors.

The inexperienced, the unlucky, and the foolhardy, fall out of crags while rock-climbing, lose themselves in the dark and the mist and snow. The physically unfit die of exhaustion, exposure, and heart attacks.

Someone has to turn out to look for them, and rescue them, and bury them. A magnificent local organisation of search and rescue teams has been built up in the District to meet these demands.

A campaign for the prevention of mountain accidents has been organised not only in your District, but also back into the big towns from which our visitors come, and to a wider audience on radio and television. We hope it may help.

**PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS AND  
OTHER DISEASES.**

The general incidence of illness can be assessed by the weekly number of new claims for sickness benefit at our local National Insurance Offices. A logarithmic graph of these figures shows a regular seasonal pattern over the years, and any variations are usually worth investigating. The general level is some measure of the local community health.

I am most grateful to my colleagues in general practice, and in the hospital service, for their prompt help in notifying infectious diseases. The control of the most serious of these illnesses is one of the most important duties of our department.

Measles was the main feature in 1971, with most cases occurring during January in the Ambleside and Langdale areas.

Immunisation against measles is still too recent to assess its results in our own locality. But we are hoping that it will eventually be as successful as the other immunisations against diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, smallpox, poliomyelitis and tuberculosis.

No cases of Tuberculosis were notified during the year.

The number of tuberculosis patients on the register at the year end were:—

		1970.	1971.
Respiratory	...	2	1
Non-Respiratory	...	1	1
		—	—
		3	2
		—	—



NOTIFIABLE DISEASES TABLE.

DISEASE.	Total	Ages												Admitted to Hospital	Deaths
		-1	1-	2-	3-	4-	5-	10-	15-	20-	35-	45-	65-		
Measles .. .. .	28	1	7	4	1	4	9	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Scarlet Fever .. .. .	4	—	—	—	—	1	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Infective Jaundice .. .. .	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	
Food Poisoning .. .. .	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	
TOTAL .. .. .	32	1	7	4	1	5	11	3	1	—	1	2	—	—	

## **Hospital and Ambulance Arrangements for Infectious Diseases.**

Hospital accommodation for infectious diseases is provided by the Manchester and Newcastle Regional Hospital Boards at Lancaster and Carlisle. Smallpox cases will be admitted to the Ainsworth Smallpox Hospital near Bury, or Langley Park, near Durham.

Ambulance transport for cases of infectious disease is provided by the Westmorland County Council.

## **The Hospital Services.**

The smaller northern part of our District lies in the area of the Newcastle Regional Hospital Board, and the general hospitals at Carlisle have traditionally served the needs of our Patterdale folk, and it seems likely that they will continue to do so.

The larger southern parts of our District lie in the area of the Manchester Regional Hospital Board, and most of the general needs of our local people have historically been met by the Westmorland County Hospital in Kendal. Some of the more specialised services have always had to be referred to distant centres. This has been understood and accepted by our local community.

In recent years there have been signs that our local folk may be forced to rely more and more on Lancaster, and less on Kendal. Some people think that Westmorland risks being left rather ill-served if the hospital services concentrate themselves on distant Lancaster and Carlisle. There is a lot of territory in between, and public transport communications are not at all easy for out-patients and visiting relatives to get to those hospitals and home again the same day.

The other side of the story is the fact that modern science has caused the hospital services to become more specialised, with expensive equipment and highly trained staff. Yet our national political system has not been able to keep pace with the shortage of doctors and nurses, technicians and secretaries. Both money and manpower are falling short of the needs.

One special service which has caused us the greatest worry has been the provision of hospital beds for our elderly people. Not only for their own sake to be looked after somewhere near their homes, but also for the sake of their visitors, who are often elderly themselves.

Since the National Health Service started, a generation ago, our elderly people have gone into the geriatric hospital at Kendal Green as their first choice for a medium or long stay hospital bed.



A few may have gone into Westmorland County Hospital for treatment of acute conditions, or perhaps to Lancaster or other distant centres for diagnostic assessment or some special treatment: but Kendal Green Hospital has been the mainstay of our local geriatric needs.

The hospital authorities' 1962 plans for closing Kendal Green Hospital were vigorously opposed by our Westmorland folk, with the result that it has been reprieved for a long time ahead, by refurbishing the older wards, and by building a new 26-bedded ward which was approaching completion at the end of 1971. It has provided a much better standard of comfort and service for the patients, and efficient working conditions for the staff.

The Westmorland County Hospital is also undergoing a long-term programme of very worthwhile improvements and extensions, so we are hoping that our local folk can get as many services as possible there, without having to trek to more distant centres.

The proposed re-organisation of the National Health Service has raised further problems about our reliance on such distant centres as Barrow, Carlisle and Newcastle. We put our points of view very forcibly to Lord Aberdare, the Secretary of State, when he visited us in December, 1971, and we hope that our special difficulties will be recognised and met in a humane manner.

## **HOUSING.**

### **Housing Acts.**

Under the Housing Acts your Council has a duty to consider the general housing conditions in your District, to ascertain whether any are unfit for human habitation, and to assess the need for further houses. You have powers to deal with unfit houses, powers to provide new houses for all classes, and various powers and duties in the management of your Council's housing estates. Good housing conditions are an integral part of public health.

### **Present Housing Position.**

There are 2,229 houses in your District. With an estimated population of 5,040 the average number of persons per house is 2.2. This figure is purely hypothetical since many of the better houses have only one or two occupants, and a number of the smaller houses are occupied or let furnished only in holiday times by absentee landlords.

It is probable that the dalesmen's houses have an average of at least four persons per house, which is not excessive for a normal-sized family, and there is probably little overcrowding within the strict definition of the Housing Act. It is temporarily increased during the peak of the holiday season, but no certificates under Section 80 of the Housing Act, 1957, have been granted by your Council to authorise exceeding the permitted numbers.

### **General Progress of Slum Clearance.**

Westmorland as a whole has made very encouraging progress in post-war slum clearance despite all the difficulties of the times. Since the campaign was resumed in 1948 well over 1,400 houses in the County have been dealt with by formal action under the Housing Acts. Most of these will eventually be demolished or converted to trade use, but many of these have been reprieved by their owners undertaking to spend considerable money for comprehensive reconditioning up to modern standards. In addition to those formal actions there have been a very creditable number of informal schemes for the renovation of sub-standard houses, either with the aid of improvement grants or entirely by private enterprise. The aim is to save a house wherever possible, but if it cannot be brought up to an acceptable standard of safety, decency and amenity the sooner it is swept away the better.

At the end of 1971 we calculated that there were very few houses outstanding on the list, and I do not expect to have to take formal condemnation action against them. Proposals for reconditioning old cottages keep coming in, and so for the purposes of the Statutory Return made in accordance with Circular 92/69 for a four-year programme to cover 1970-3 we supplied a nominal figure of a couple per year, but even these seem likely to be rescued by reconditioning.

### **Closing Orders.**

*Housing Act, 1957. Section 18.*

No closing orders were made during the year. No houses subject to closing orders are still occupied.

### **Undertakings not to use for Human Habitation.**

*Housing Act, 1957. Section 16.*

Two such undertakings were accepted during the year. Two houses subject to undertakings are still occupied.

### **Undertakings to Repair.**

*Housing Act, 1957. Section 16.*

No undertakings to execute works of repair were accepted during the year. None were outstanding at the end.

### **Improvement Grants.**

*House Purchase and Housing Act, 1959.*

Discretionary improvement grants were approved during the year for 13 houses.

Standard grants during the same year numbered 14.

### **Demolition Orders.**

*Housing Act, 1957. Section 17.*

No demolition orders were made during the year.

There were no demolition orders outstanding on the Register of Local Land Charges at the year end.

### **Clearance Areas.**

*Housing Act, 1957. Section 42.*

There is only one outstanding case on the Local Land Charges Register. It is a house which lingered in occupation from the time when a clearance order was made by the West Ward Council over 36 years ago, and was not vacated until the death of the tenant in 1965. I suppose it will have to be pulled down. All the rest of the block went years ago for road widening.

### **Estimated Requirements for New Houses.**

*Housing Act, 1957. Section 90.*

Your District is perhaps one of the most difficult areas in the whole country to assess for its new housing needs. It is subjected to so many outside pressures and influences, often operating from behind the scenes. On one hand there is a noticeable planning resistance to much new housing development on the remaining open areas of the National Park, and on the other hand there is the steady take-over of our traditional dalesfolks' houses to make holiday cottages for outsiders with more money to spend on them.

There were 221 applicants on your waiting list for Council houses during the year. 27 of these families were without a separate home of their own, and 194 families wished to exchange their old houses for a Council one, or to live in this area.



We reckon that a few families still live in cottages which are condemnable, and where the cost of reconditioning is not economically attractive to their present landlords with sitting tenants in occupation. No doubt many of those little houses will eventually be saved by outside purchasers willing to recondition them for owner occupation or holiday lettings.

Some of the families in the condemnable houses have not yet put themselves on your formal waiting-lists, and there are some other people, now residing outside the area, who would like to live nearer their work within the District, or just live there anyway. The need is not quite the same thing as the demand.

### **House Building Progress.**

Since the end of the 1939-45 War and up to 31st December, 1971, your Council completed 245.

During the same post-War period 210 houses were completed by private enterprise, 20 during the current year.

The selection of centrally-placed sites I feel will be particularly important for old people who need some community help in the time of their difficulties, but who enjoy the pride of their independence at other times.

Your Council have made an especially valuable contribution to meet this need. Two blocks of flatlets for elderly people have been provided on central sites in Ambleside, each with a resident warden, in conjunction with the welfare services of the Westmorland County Council. The first block of 17 flatlets was opened in 1968, and the second group of 25 flatlets in 1971. They are very much appreciated.

### **Housing Management.**

Your Council now own 313 houses. Routine repairs and maintenance are carried out by local contractors. Your present estates do not justify the employment of direct labour, but in the years to come the number of your houses will be increased and the maintenance will require constant attention and you may be faced with considerable reconditioning of the rural houses.

The rents of your Council houses vary between £1.14 and £4.99 exclusive of rates, and the rateable values are between £38 and £70.

Your Council charge an extra rent to those tenants who have allowed married children or relatives to live with them. An exception is however made in those cases in which aged parents no

longer at work are being housed by their family. An additional rent is also required from tenants who use their houses for boarding visitors or for bed and breakfast guests.

### **Housing Nuisances.**

Visits were made to investigate complaints in houses leading to the service of 4 informal notices for their remedy. In no case was it necessary to obtain a Court Order.

### **Dangerous Buildings.**

No action was taken during the year.

### **Caravans.**

At the end of the year there were 20 licensed sites, holding some 660 caravans, although most of them were concentrated on the large model site at White Cross Bay.

The introduction of the Caravan Sites Act into our Lakeland villages has been smooth and effective. We have enjoyed the help and support of the Lake District Planning Board, and the National Trust, and most of the land owners. We have deliberately set a high standard, and the site operators have accepted that policy: indeed some of them have gone much further to enhance the attractions and service of their sites.

### **Tented Camping.**

The control of tented camping is still very haphazard; this is due partly to the weakness of the law, and partly to the physical impossibility of patrolling the whole district at peak holiday times.

During the year 3 licences were in force for tented camping sites: these were well operated, and were the least of our troubles. Our major problems arise each season from the host of casual tents which appear on our roadside verges, our commons and fields, and even on mountain tops.



## WATER SUPPLIES.

The public water supplies are administered by the Lakes and Lune Water Board, on which your Council has representation. The sources are upland surface catchments at Ambleside, Grasmere and Chapel Stile, underground springs at Patterdale, Hartsop and Little Langdale: an ancilliary supply from the river at Chapel Stile, and connections to the Manchester Corporation Thirlmere aqueduct at various points. There is ample quantity for most of these places.

Your Council continue to have a responsibility to check that the quality of the public water supplies is maintained safely for preserving the public health. Periodical tests are made on samples of water from consumers' taps, and some of the results are set out in Appendix A to this report.

Most of these public water supplies are treated by chemical sterilization. No fluoride is added, and the natural fluorine and radioactivity levels are low.

Outside the areas of the public water supplies conditions are generally poor. There are a few small privately-owned systems of varying quality, and the rest of the District relies upon becks, small runners, superficial springs, and the surface drainage catchpits, unreliable in yield and many of undesirable quality. I can do no more than warn the users that they drink it at their own risk, that they should have it tested for purity at regular intervals, and that if in doubt they should boil it.

I continue to operate the excellent liaison arrangements with the Westmorland officers of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, for the joint investigation and assessment of applications for grant-aided farm water supply schemes. I have been most grateful for the longstanding co-operation of the Ministry's Regional Microbiologist and the other staff at the Regional Headquarters in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. It enables us to co-ordinate the safeguards to the public health as well as the agricultural interests.

I record my appreciation of the help and liaison maintained by the officers of the Lakes and Lune Water Board.

### **Baths and Hot-Water Systems.**

The 1961 Census revealed that about 24% of unshared dwellings in our District had no fixed bath. Although far from satisfactory, it is an improvement since the 1951 Census when 44% were without.

The 1961 Census showed also that about 15% of such households are without a hot water tap. There is still a lot to be done to bring our older and smaller cottages up to acceptable modern standards. Improvement grants are continuing to make up this leeway, and I am sure that the 1971 Census will show what good progress we have made.

## **SEWERAGE.**

Public sewers are perforce limited to the built-up areas of our Urban District. All the rest have to rely on private disposal systems. This report can depict only an outline description of the main public installations.

### **Ambleside.**

Ambleside is the only area within your District which possesses a sewage disposal plant of any size. A complete reconstruction of the works was carried out during 1963 with the installation of a modern activated sludge plant.

The technical difficulties of sludge drying in our local climate are being tackled by the construction of a heat treatment and pressing plant at the Ambleside sewage disposal works. Oil burners will be used for the heating, the sludge will be pressed into solid blocks, and the strong extracted liquid will be returned through the main works for dilution and further processing. This same plant will also be used for treating the sludge from the new disposal works for Grasmere, when brought in tankers to Ambleside. Construction was completed during 1971, and commissioning trials are still in progress.

We are bedeviled by the geographical limitations of our enforced position alongside the river, and the whole works are apt to disappear under water in times of flood. Apart from the damage of fittings being swept away, the debris makes normal operation rather heart-breaking for the maintenance staff. The record marks of flood levels on the pump-house tell their own tale.

### **Grasmere.**

Another year of upheaval and anguish in Grasmere, with the constructional works for installing a new public sewerage system and building a proper sewage disposal plant. Progress has been protracted with this difficult and expensive scheme, but work commenced during 1968 and we hope it may be completed during 1972.

### **Chapel Stile and Elterwater.**

Chapel Stile is sewered into a large septic tank which has an outfall into the river. It is not satisfactory in operation, and inadequate for any further development. Elterwater village has an even cruder system of ancient drains, discharging direct into the river. During 1967 your Council asked their consulting engineers to prepare a sewerage and sewage disposal works to serve both villages.

This led to further consideration of the feasibility of extending the scheme to include the area around Skelwith Bridge, but it was



decided not. It is hoped that the approved scheme will go to tender, and a start made in 1972.

### **Troutbeck.**

Troutbeck has a short length of sewer which serves only a few houses and leads into a small septic tank belonging to your Council. It does not seem to give much trouble. It is hardly worthy to be classed as a disposal works and it would be unlikely to carry much additional load.

The installation of a public water supply to Troutbeck village will inevitably mean that a public sewerage system must follow. Otherwise there will be a real mess.

### **Patterdale.**

Patterdale is sewered by a short length of piping into a septic tank belonging to your Council in Robinson's field.

### **Elsewhere.**

No public sewerage exists in Glenridding, Rydal and Little Langdale, nor in the more scattered rural hamlets and townships.

### **Prevalence of Water-closets.**

Water-closets have been installed mainly in the areas which are served by public sewers and in the better type of house where private sewage systems have been made. The 1961 Census revealed that about 12% of our houses are still without a water-closet inside. One earth-closet was abolished during the year. One conversion to a water closet was made during the year.

As your District is the nucleus of the National Park and will receive an increasing number of holiday visitors from this country and overseas, it is most desirable that the extension of your sewerage schemes shall be followed by the conversion of earth-closets, privies and privy-middens to more hygienic water-closets. I hope that full advantage will be taken of improvement grants and that the 1971 Census will show our good progress.

### **Public Conveniences.**

Public conveniences are situated at Ambleside, Glenridding, Grasmere and Waterhead. From time to time they suffer grievously at the hands of hooligans who do wanton damage to the fittings.

The Lake District Planning Board propose to provide public conveniences at White Moss Common, and Elterwater. These are places where the need for public conveniences arises predominantly on account of visitors to the National Park, so the whole cost of construction and maintenance will be borne by the Board under the Countryside Act, 1968. This policy will be a great help to District Councils such as ours.

### **Highway Laybys.**

Many of the highway laybys and casual parking and picnicking spots get into a mess during the season. The land over the wall becomes an open latrine. Bottles and litter get scattered around, and some of the laybys get rat-infested at times. Private water supplies and nearby residents are put in peril and so are the people who choose to park on these sites at night.

The time may be near when the more popular spots should be provided with some sort of latrines as well as litter-baskets. The present arguments follow the familiar pattern of who should pay for them. Until this can be resolved, it would help for notices to be displayed in the laybys telling people where they can find more decent and safer facilities.

### **Lake Craft Sanitation.**

I am not entirely happy about the amount of crude sewage which is dropped overboard from houseboats, cabin cruisers and lake steamers on Windermere. It seems to be increasing every year and it can be rather unpleasant. Something better is needed.

These seasonal contributions may be an insignificant factor in causing the progressive over-enrichment of the lake, compared with the all-year pollution from riparian agricultural fertilisers, and the outfalls from sewage works. All part of a much wider phenomenon of environmental pollution.

## PUBLIC CLEANSING.

### Refuse Collection.

Domestic refuse is collected from the whole of your District with the exception of a few detached and isolated dwellings.

### Refuse Disposal.

The main tip is at Brathay over the Lancashire border. Access is difficult, and the contours of the site make fully-controlled tipping almost impossible. The covering of the tip has been much improved since pulverised refuse has come from the Ambleside plant. The authorised life of this tip is nearly over, and alternative sites are being investigated.

One interesting possibility is that the relatively inoffensive end-product from the Ambleside central pulverising plant might be used to cover many of the large quarry spoil heaps in our district, and thus build up a humus and soil layer sufficient for later grassing them over or tree planting. This might offer a promising chance of improving the local environment in suitable places.

The old main tip in the centre of Ambleside has always had to continue to be available for the winter occasions when access to Brathay became impossible: and it continued as a disposal place for local trade refuse. With the installation of the pulverising plant, the Ambleside tip has taken on a new lease of life: it is needed for the large or unsuitable items that cannot be pulverised. Much of the very old parts of the tip are inert and inoffensive, so ingenuity in earth-shifting is progressively improving what used to be rather an eyesore, undesirably high above the river bank and surrounding roads.

Moreover the Ambleside tip site has become integrated with the nearby cluster of essential sanitary engineering projects: the extensive enlargements to the sewage works, the new central sludge drying plant, the refuse pulveriser, and various public works depot activities. So although such a central site in Ambleside may not have been an ideal choice, we are likely to have to put up with it for the rest of this century, and we might as well tidy it up and improve it as best we can.

The tip at Mill Moss in Patterdale was closed in 1969, and nowadays our collection vehicles bring all the Patterdale refuse over the Kirkstone Pass to the central pulveriser in Ambleside. The old site has been tidied up, and there are welcome plans for reclamation to enhance the environment in this part of such a lovely village and countryside.



Beyond the established tipping sites, I think that our pulverised refuse could have valuable soil fertilising qualities and usefully fill in many rocky hollows for land improvement.

I am much indebted to Mr. Thompson, Engineer and Surveyor for the technical information in the sewerage and refuse disposal sections of this report, and for his constant help and co-operation.

### **Street Cleansing.**

The work is undertaken by the Highways Department, and the streets are well maintained.

## **FOOD HYGIENE.**

### **General Powers.**

Your Council bear most of the statutory responsibility for safeguarding the public from foodborne diseases. The main aim is directed towards securing proper and hygienic conditions for the manufacture, preparation and sale of food. The secondary aim is to trace and localise any outbreaks of disease which may occur in spite of preventive measures.

### **Precautions against Contamination.**

Food hygiene is steadily improving throughout your area. Public opinion is well ahead of the law and most traders are aware of the fact; the good food trader does not need official instruction in basic cleanliness or the enforcement of legal minimum standards. He may welcome advice on technical problems, but his aim is how high he can get, not how low he can get away with.

The responsibility for safe food does not rest entirely with the trader as the housewife must play her part as well. Quite a lot of strange things happen to food between the shop counter and the dinner plate, and the educational campaign has had to be carried into the home. Foodborne diseases, mild dysenteries and attacks of diarrhoea and vomiting are not infrequent in our homes and among our visitors. I am confident that higher standards will reduce these preventable diseases.

### **Food Trade Categories.**

The Secretary of State requires me to furnish details about the categories of food trade carried on during the year. They are set out in the adjacent table.

Regulation 16 relates to the requirement for providing wash-hand basins, and Regulation 19 relates to the requirements for providing facilities for washing food and equipment used in food businesses.

Category of Premises	Number	Number fitted to comply with Reg. 16	Number to which Reg. 19 Applies	Number fitted to comply with Reg. 19
Hotels (licensed and un-licensed) .. .. .	59	59	59	59
Guest Houses, Boarding Houses and Hostels* ..	58	not known	58	58
Licensed Premises (other than Hotels) .. ..	7	7	7	7
Catering Establishments (other than Hotels) ..	30	30	30	30
Confectioners .. ..	5	5	5	5
Grocers .. .. .	16	16	16	16
Greengrocers & Fishmongers	3	3	3	3
Fish and Chip Shops ..	1	1	1	1
Butchers .. .. .	5	5	5	5
Sweet shops and other premises retailing ice cream	50	50	50	50

\*Does not include the many boarding houses which are not rated as such.

### Ice-Cream Trade.

The following premises were registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955:—

Manufacture by hot mix, cold mix, storage and sale	...	1
Manufacture by cold mix, storage and sale	...	Nil
Storage and sale only	...	52

### Prepared Meats.

The number of premises on the Register under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, used for the preparation of sausages, potted meats, pressed meat, and pickled foods was 4 at the year end. No particular difficulties have been encountered in these trades.

### Liquid Eggs.

There are no egg pasteurisation plants in the District.

**Poultry Processing.**

There are no poultry processing premises.

**Milk Registrations.**

There were 39 registered distributors and 1 registered dairy which were not dairy farms. No particular difficulties were met, and milk-round vehicles were generally maintained in good condition.

**Pathogenic Organisms in Milk.**

Biological and other test results on 82 samples taken by various Authorities, from sources in your area, continued to be passed to me. I have had no cause during the current year to serve any notices under the Milk and Dairies Regulations to restrict the sale of milk or the activities of milk-handlers.

Special attention was directed towards the organisms of brucella abortus in the above samples. None were found.

**Licensed Slaughterhouses and Knackers' Yards.**

There are no slaughterhouses and no knackers' yards in your District.

**Condemnation of Meat.**

All slaughtering is carried out at the Kendal Abattoir where the meat is inspected by the Borough Inspectors. No meat was condemned in your District.

**Condemnation of Other Foods.**

The following foodstuffs were condemned by your Inspector during the year:—

Cooked Ham	...	...	...	24 lbs.
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**Method of Disposal of Condemned Food.**

The Secretary of State requires me to describe the current methods for the disposal of condemned food. In this District it is by burial at Ambleside Tip.



## **GENERAL INSPECTIONS.**

Your Council employ one part-time Public Health Inspector. It is difficult to arrange duties in combined appointments in a small local authority, particularly when an Inspector is single-handed, and there has to be considerable elasticity to cover all the responsibilities.

There are certain advantages in combined public health inspection and housing management. I record my appreciation of his work during the year.

### **Offensive Trades.**

There are no offensive trades in the District.

### **Factories.**

There are 30 factories on the Register. No inspections were made and no written notices were served. No Legal Notices remained outstanding at the end of the year. No prosecutions were required. No references were made to H.M. Inspector and none were received from her.

No lists of outworkers were supplied to your Council by factory owners, and I have no official knowledge of any cases of default in this respect.

There are no basement bakehouses in the District.

H.M. Inspector of Factories has been given details of your Urban District's administration of the relevant sections of Parts I and VIII of the Factories Act, 1964.



Factory Inspections.

Premises.	Number of Premises.	Number of		
		Inspections.	Written Notices.	Occupiers prosecuted.
Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ..	1	—	—	—
Factories not included in (1), in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority .. ..	29	—	—	—
Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises) .. ..	—	—	—	—
Total .. ..	30	—	—	—

No defects were found.

Offices and Shops.

This legislation makes provision for the safety, health and welfare of people employed in these premises.

Forty-one visits were made during the year.

Type of Premises	Registered at year end	Inspected during year	Persons Employed
Offices .. .. .	39	3	134
Retail Shops .. ..	69	30	178
Wholesale Shops and Warehouses ..	1	Nil	1
Catering establishments open to public, canteens .. ..	36	8	309
Fuel storage depots .. ..	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total .. .. .	145	41	622

Twenty-one written notices and no verbal notices were served for contraventions discovered.

Common Lodging Houses.

There are no registered common lodging houses in the area.

**Pest Control.**

Your District is covered by the South Westmorland Joint Pest Control Board. Regular visits are made to your refuse tips which seem to attract rather an undesirable number of rats.

**Boarding Kennels.**

*Animal Boarding Establishments Act, 1963.*

One such place is on the register in your District. It was inspected and found to be satisfactory.

**Clean Air.**

No action was required.

**Compulsory Removal**

*National Assistance Act, 1948-1951.*

Happily there was no need during the year to invoke the powers of this Act.

Such cases are extremely distressing to deal with and the course of compulsory removal is reserved to meet the emergencies of a last resort when all other methods of help have failed. Sometimes it is very hard to decide what is really in the best interests of the patient.

**Public Mortuary and Post-mortem Room.**

Public mortuary and post-mortem examination facilities are now available by arrangement at Westmorland County Hospital, Kendal.

**Crematorium.**

Negotiations were continued during the year with several neighbouring local authorities to explore the possibilities of establishing a crematorium somewhere near Kendal, to avoid the long journeys to Morecambe, Barrow or Carlisle. The idea seems unlikely to succeed before Local Government re-organisation overtakes us in April, 1974.

**Laboratory Services.**

The Public Health Laboratory Services at Preston and Carlisle provide the necessary facilities for most of our public health investigations. I am most grateful for their help in times of need.

# **APPENDIX A.** **Laboratory Examination of Public Water Supplies**

Nature of Test	Standards Max.	Ambleside	Grasmere	Patterdale	Great Langdale	Little Langdale	Hartsop
Pr. coli count 37° ..	3-10	0	0	0	35	90	0
Faecal coli/strep ..	—				35	90	
Date sampled last ..	—	21.9.71	21.9.71	9.9.69	17.8.71	17.8.71	9.9.69
Character ..	—	Clear	Clear	Clear	Clear	Clear	Clear
Reaction pH ..	—	7.0	7.1	7.7	7.1	7.5	6.8
Ammonical Nitrogen..	.041	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Albuminoid Nitrogen	.006	.01	.015	.04	.02	.005	.035
Total Solids ..	1000	40	40	52	32	44	44
Hardness—Total ..	300	27	24	32	14	32	26
Carbonate ..	—	11	11	28	8	18	14
Non-Carbonate ..	—	19	24	24	12	20	22
Chlorides ..	30	7	6	6	6	6	7
Nitrates ..	1	.25	.38	.12	.03	.04	.21
Nitrites ..	—	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
0.2 Absorbed ..	1	.36	.05	.12	.68	.28	.12
Heavy Metals ..	—	n/a	Nil	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rainfall 24 hours ..	—	1.06"	1.06"	.51"	.51"	Nil	.51"
Date sampled ..	—	17.11.69	17.11.69	6.10.70	4.10.70	17.9.68	6.10.70
Laboratory ..	—	Preston	Preston	Preston	Preston	Preston	Preston

Chemical analyses expressed in parts per million.













